

# U.S. to Drop Seale's Contempt Charges

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The Justice Department announced yesterday that it would drop contempt-of-court charges against Black Panther leader Bobby G. Seale, rather than reveal the contents of electronic surveillance that apparently overheard his voice while he was in jail.

James R. Thompson, U.S. Attorney in Chicago, told the Seventh U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals there that "it would be injurious to our national security interests" to disclose the wiretapping logs as ordered by that court in a decision last May.

The contempt charges, made by U.S. District Court Judge Julius J. Hoffman during the tumultuous "Chicago Seven" conspiracy trial in 1968-70, were the last ones pending against Seale.

After 21 months in prison and two trials, Seale was freed on bond in May, 1971. He has since declared that he will run for mayor of Oakland, Calif., in that city's municipal elections next year.

Seale was sentenced to four years in prison by Judge Hoff, on the conspiracy charges, the man on the contempt charges, the wiretapping logs as, or before he was severed from charge against Seale, "in the interest of justice," rather than try him separately.

The contempt charges, made strations at the 1968 Demo-

cratic National Convention

in Chicago

had still not ruled on a defense or drop the contempt defense appeal or the conviction.

After the "Chicago Seven"

jury acquitted five defendants

on the conspiracy charges, the

late court said that since the

A. William Olson, assistant attorney general in charge of the Justice Department's Internal Security Division, said

Seale, all seven other defendants and two of their lawyers, heard in a non-court-authorized

on the contempt charges.

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government had acknowledged surveillance of Seale

now dropped almost a dozen

cases against antiwar militants

has asked that a judge from outside the Chicago area be

In the other major case that

has been pending against

Seale, a Connecticut judge dis-

missed murder and kidnap charges in May, 1971, ruling

that it would be "impossible" to choose a new jury to re-

place the one that was unable

to reach a verdict in the kill-

ing of another Black Panther.

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Court found that only Seale